

## ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A method of treating a substrate that is exposed to the atmosphere, in which the substrate contains an oxidizable metal compound having a color and a development speed under atmospheric conditions, the method comprising the step of contacting the substrate with an oxidizer to increase the development speed of the color. The substrate may be natural, or manmade, such as a hydraulic material, for example concrete. The oxidizer is preferably free of chromates. The oxidizer is preferably applied to the substrate in an aqueous solution.